THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) to (c) An allocation of Rs. 75 crore was released to the State of Assam for the year 2000-2001 and execution of works is expected to commence shortly. The State Government have been advised that, at this stage, the available funds for the year 2001-2002 may not exceed the last year's allocation.

(d) The State Government have reported utilization of 76.46% of available funds under different Schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development in the year 2000-2001.

National Rural Road Development Agency

†3300. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up a National Rural Road Development Agency with a view to extend roadways to rural areas;

(b) if so, the responsibilities proposed to be assigned to the agency; and

(c) the total length and number of new roads targeted to be constructed to link the rural areas with each other by the end of the Ninth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) and (b) Government propose to shortly set up the National Rural Road Development Agency (NRRDA) to extend support to the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) through advice on technical specifications, project appraisal, appointment of part-time Quality Control Monitors, Management of Monitoring Systems and submission of Periodic Reports to the Ministry of Rural Development. This Agency would be a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

(c) While no specific target has been fixed regarding the length and number of new roads to be constructed to link the rural areas by the end of the Ninth Five Year Plan (2001-02), the Programme seeks to provide connectivity, by way of an

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

All-weather Road, to the Unconnected Habitations in the rural areas, in such a way that Habitations with a population of 1000 persons and above are covered in three years and all Unconnected Habitations with a population of 500 persons and above by the end of the Tenth Plan Period (2007).

Low Growth rate of Employment Opportunities in Rural Areas

†3301. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the annual growth rate of employment opportunities in the rural areas in the country has remained only 0.58 per cent during the years 1993-94 to 1999-2000;

(b) if not, what is Government's assessment in this regard;

(c) the annual growth rate of the employment opportunities targeted to be created in other areas besides agriculture by Government during the above period; and

(d) the details of the schemes formulated in this regard and the average expenditure earmarked for their implementation?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) and (b) As per estimates from 55th (1999-2000) round of National Sample Survey, the growth of employment opportunities on Usual Principal and Subsidiary Status basis, in the rural areas in the country has been 0.51% per annum during 1993-94 to 1999-2000.

(c) and (d) The names of the Programmes implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development in rural areas of the country during 1993-94 to 1999-2000 with specific objective of creating employment opportunities, alongwith the targets set and the expenditure incurred under these schemes during the said period are given in the Statement.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.